



# 50 Common French Words Every Beginner Must Know

Start speaking French today — beautifully, simply, and with confidence.



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Welcome!

# So You Want to Learn French — But Where Do You Begin?

Here's a secret that experienced language teachers know: you don't need to memorize thousands of words to start speaking French. Research shows that just 100-200 common words cover around 50% of everyday conversation. That means learning the right words gets you speaking much faster than you think.

"Just 50 words can unlock your first real French conversation."

This guide gives you **50 of the most useful French words** for beginners — with pronunciation, meaning, and a short example sentence for each one. No grammar overwhelm. No boring drills. Just the words you'll actually use.



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## SECTION 1

## Greetings — Words You'll Use Every Single Day

French people always greet before speaking. Even entering a shop, you say *Bonjour*. Skipping it is considered rude — so these seven words really matter!

### Bonjour

(bohn-ZHOOR)

= Hello / Good morning

Bonjour ! Comment ca va ? → Hello! How are you?

### Bonsoir

(bohn-SWAHR)

= Good evening

Bonsoir, madame. → Good evening, ma'am.

### Salut !

(sah-LOO)

= Hi! (informal)

Salut ! Tu vas bien ? → Hi! Are you doing well?

### Au revoir

(oh ruh-VWAHR)

= Goodbye

Au revoir et bonne journee ! → Goodbye and have a great day!

### A bientôt !

(ah byahn-TOH)

= See you soon

A bientot, mon ami ! → See you soon, my friend!

### Bonne nuit

(bon NWEE)

= Good night

Bonne nuit, dors bien. → Good night, sleep well.

### Enchanté(e)

(ahn-shahn-TAY)

= Nice to meet you

Je m'appelle Marie. Enchante ! → My name is Marie. Nice to meet you!

## SECTION 2

## Polite Words — Be Kind, Sound Fluent

Politeness in French goes a very long way. These small words will make you sound respectful and confident, even as a complete beginner.

### Merci

(mehr-SEE)

= Thank you

Merci beaucoup ! → Thank you very much!

**S'il vous plaît**

(seel voo PLEH)

= Please (formal)

Un café, s'il vous plaît. → A coffee, please.

**De rien**

(duh RYAHN)

= You're welcome

-- Merci ! -- De rien. → -- Thank you! -- You're welcome.

**Excusez-moi**

(ex-koo-ZAY mwah)

= Excuse me

Excusez-moi, où est la gare ? → Excuse me, where is the station?

**Pardon**

(par-DOHN)

= Sorry / Pardon

Pardon, je ne comprends pas. → Sorry, I don't understand.

**S'il te plaît**

(seel tuh PLEH)

= Please (informal)

Passe-moi le sel, s'il te plaît. → Pass me the salt, please.

**Oui / Non**

(wee / nohn)

= Yes / No

Oui, je parle français ! → Yes, I speak French!

## SECTION 3



## Common Verbs — The Engine of Every Sentence

Verbs are the backbone of any language. Learn these ten and you can already build dozens of real sentences. These are the verbs French people use every single day.

### Être

(EH-truh)

= To be

Je suis étudiant. → I am a student.

### Avoir

(ah-VWAHR)

= To have

J'ai faim. → I am hungry. (lit: I have hunger)

### Aller

(ah-LAY)

= To go

Je vais à Paris. → I'm going to Paris.

### Vouloir

(voo-LWAHR)

= To want

Je veux du café. → I want some coffee.

### Pouvoir

(poo-VWAHR)

= Can / To be able to

Pouvez-vous m'aider ? → Can you help me?

### Faire

(FAIR)

= To do / To make

Qu'est-ce que tu fais ? → What are you doing?

### Parler

(par-LAY)

= To speak

Je parle un peu français. → I speak a little French.

### Manger

(mahn-ZHAY)

= To eat

On mange à quelle heure ? → What time do we eat?

### Comprendre

(com-PRAHN-druh)

= To understand

Je ne comprends pas.  
→ I don't understand.

### Aimer

(eh-MAY)

= To like / To love

J'aime le chocolat. → I love chocolate.

## SECTION 4

# Everyday Nouns — The Things Around You

These are the words for things you see, use, or talk about every day. Every French noun has a gender — **le** (masculine) or **la** (feminine). Always learn the article with the noun!



**La maison**

(la meh-ZOHN)

= The house

Ma maison est grande. → My house is big.

**La voiture**

(la vwa-TOOR)

= The car

Ma voiture est rouge. → My car is red.

**Le travail**

(luh trah-VY)

= Work

Je vais au travail. → I'm going to work.

**L'eau**

(loh)

= Water

Je veux de l'eau, s'il vous plait. → I want some water, please.

**Le pain**

(luh paN)

= Bread

Le pain est délicieux! → The bread is delicious!

**L'ami / L'amie**

(lah-MEE)

= Friend

C'est mon ami Paul. → This is my friend Paul.

**La famille**

(la fah-MEEY)

= Family

J'aime ma famille. → I love my family.

**Le temps**

(luh tahn)

= Time / Weather

Quel temps fait-il ? → What is the weather like?

**L'argent**

(lar-ZAHN)

= Money

Je n'ai pas d'argent. → I don't have any money.

**Le livre**

(luh LEE-vruh)

**= Book**

Ce livre est interessant. → This book is interesting.

SECTION 4 (continued)

## More Everyday Nouns

### Le téléphone

(luh tay-lay-FOHN)

= Phone

Mon telephone est perdu. → My phone is lost.

### La rue

(la roo)

= Street

C'est dans cette rue. → It's on this street.

### Le restaurant

(luh res-toh-RAHN)

= Restaurant

Ce restaurant est fantastique ! → This restaurant is fantastic!

### La ville

(la veel)

= City / Town

Paris est une belle ville. → Paris is a beautiful city.

### Le jour

(luh zhoor)

= Day

Bonne journee ! → Have a good day!

### La nuit

(la nwee)

= Night

La nuit est belle. → The night is beautiful.

### L'heure

(luh)

= Hour / Time

Quelle heure est-il ? → What time is it?

### La question

(la kes-TYOHN)

= Question

J'ai une question. → I have a question.

### Le problème

(luh pro-BLEM)

= Problem

Il n'y a pas de probleme. → There is no problem.

### La réponse

(la ray-POHNS)

= Answer

Quelle est la réponse ? → What is the answer?

SECTION 5

## Useful Expressions — Sound Natural Immediately

These little phrases are what make you sound like a real French speaker — not just someone reading from a textbook.

French Expression	Pronunciation	English Meaning
<b>C'est bon. Je ne</b>	(say bohn) (zhuh	It's good / That's fine.
<b>sais pas. Bien sûr !</b>	nuh say pah) (byaN	I don't know.
<b>Peut-être C'est</b>	soor) (puh-TET-	Of course!
<b>combien ? Je</b>	ruh) (say com-	Maybe.
<b>m'appelle... Ou</b>	BYAHN) (zhuh	How much is it?
<b>est... ? Je</b>	mah-PEL) (oo eh)	My name is...
<b>voudrais... Ça va ?</b>	(zhuh voo-DREH)	Where is... ?
<b>Ça va !</b>	(sah vah) (sah vah)	I would like...
		How's it going?
		I'm fine! / It's going well!

## PRO TIPS

## How to Memorize French Words Faster

**Use the word the same day you learn it.** Say it out loud, write it in a sentence, or use it while cooking dinner. 'Je veux du pain' while making toast works better than drilling flashcards for an hour.

1

2

**Stick labels around your house.** Put sticky notes on your door (la porte), fridge (le refrigerator), mirror (le miroir). You'll absorb them without even trying.

3

**Learn words in pairs.** Learn oui and non together. Learn bonjour and au revoir together. Your brain loves contrast and patterns.

4

**Listen, even if you don't understand yet.** French music, podcasts, or TV in the background trains your ear to the rhythm of the language. It really works!

5

**Review little and often.** Ten minutes every day beats two hours once a week. Consistency is the single most important ingredient in language learning.

## CONCLUSION

## You're Already on Your Way!

You've just learned 50 French words. That's not nothing — that's the **foundation of real conversation**. Every fluent French speaker started exactly where you are: curious, a little nervous, and taking that first step.

The key is simple: **keep going**. Show up tomorrow. Review five words. Say one sentence. French will open doors for you — to travel, to culture, to people and places you haven't imagined yet. It starts right here, with Bonjour.

Bonne chance ! — Good luck! You've totally got this.

READY TO GO FURTHER?

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